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3. (Amended) The ink composition according to claim 1 [or 2], wherein the colorant comprises a water-soluble dye and/or a pigment.

5. (Amended) The ink composition according to claim 1 [any one of claims 1 to 4], wherein the compound represented by formula (I) is a mixture of at least two or more compounds selected from the group consisting of the compounds represented by formula (I).

6. (Amended) The ink composition according to claim 1 [any one of claims 1 to 5], wherein the compound represented by formula (I) has an average molecular weight of not more than 1000.

7. (Amended) The ink composition according to claim 1 [any one of claims 1 to 6], wherein the ink composition has a surface tension of not more than 40 mN/m.

12. (Amended) The ink composition according to claim 8 [any one of claims 8 to 11], which further comprises 0 to 10% by weight of (di)propylene glycol monobutyl ether and the weight ratio of the 1,2-alkylene glycol to (di)propylene glycol monobutyl ether is 1:0 to 1:10.

13. (Amended) The ink composition according to claim 8 [any one of claims 8 to 11], which further comprises 0 to 5% by weight of an acetylene glycol surfactant and the weight ratio of the 1,2-alkylene glycol to the acetylene glycol surfactant is 1:0 to 1:3.

14. (Amended) The ink composition according to claim 8 [any one of claims 8 to 11], which further comprises 0 to 20% by weight of di(tri)ethylene glycol monobutyl ether and the weight ratio of the 1,2-alkylene glycol to the di(tri)ethylene glycol monobutyl ether is 1:0 to 10.

15. (Amended) An ink set for ink jet recording, comprising at least two ink compositions according to claim 1 [any one of claims 1 to 14], characterized in that said ink set satisfies a relationship represented by formula (a) at least at 20°C:

$$((\mu_{\max} - \mu_{\min}) / \mu_{\max}) \times 100 \leq 5 (\%) \quad (a)$$

wherein μ_{\max} represents the maximum viscosity value in the ink compositions contained in the ink set; and μ_{\min} represents the minimum viscosity value in the ink compositions contained in the ink set.

17. (Amended) The ink set according to claim 15 [or 16], wherein said at least two ink composition are identical to each other in color but different from each other in color density.

18. (Amended) The ink set according to claim 15 [any one of claims 15 to 17], wherein the colorant contained in each of the ink compositions is a pigment and the viscosities of the ink compositions as measured with a rotating viscometer at a torque of 1 mN·m to 100 N·m satisfy the relationship represented by formula (a).

19. (Amended) The ink set according to claim 15 [any one of claims 15 to 18], wherein at least one of the ink compositions has a colorant content of not less than 5% by weight.

20. (Amended) An ink jet recording method comprising the steps of: ejecting droplets of an ink composition; and depositing the droplets onto a recording medium to perform printing, the ink composition being an ink composition in the ink set according to claim 15 [any one of claims 15 to 19].